REMARKS

Applicant has amended claims 1, 15, and 29 and added new dependent claims 43-45 as set forth above. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the outstanding office action is respectfully requested.

The Office has rejected claims 1-42 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,317,044 to Maloney (Maloney) in view of US Patent No. 6,801,245 to Shniberg (Shniberg). The Office asserts Maloney teaches an asset management system (Column 10, lines 11 - 14) comprising one or more stations for receiving a tangible asset (Column 10, lines 11 - 14, where the storage unit is a station for receiving the tangible asset; Column 10, lines 34 - 37) and a server system coupled to a communication medium (Column 10, lines 13 - 15; the remote computer), wherein the server system stores information regarding tangible asset transactions between the stations and the tangible assets in the asset management system (Figure 37E, step 660). The Office acknowledges that Maloney does not teach the communication medium allows the asset management system to be accessed remotely via the communication medium, but asserts Shniberg teaches a system for tracking objects that includes a remote tracking center that is located remotely from a local tracking computer that remotely communicates with the local computer for tracking information (Column 3, lines 28 - 35; Column 5, lines 12 - 19). The Office asserts it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use Shniberg's teaching to include a remote tracking center in Maloney's system in order to allow tracking of objects on a wide geographic scale.

Neither Maloney nor Shniberg, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest, "wherein the server system in each of the stations independently determines whether authorization to access the station is permitted" as recited in claim 1, "determining at the server system in each of the stations whether authorization to access the station is permitted" as recited in claims 15 and 29. The Office's attention is respectfully directed to FIGS. 1-3 and col. 22, lines 25-34 in Maloney which states:

> Upon receiving the identification code contained in the personal identification assembly, the remote controller 54, at step 610, verifies that the personal identification assembly is being used by its owner by prompting the user for a password on video monitor 60, receiving a password from the user at the remote controller 54, and then determining, at step 612,

> whether or not the user is authorized to access the system 50 by looking-up the identification code and password in a table including authorized code/password combinations.

Accordingly, in Maloney the authorization determination is made at one centralized location in remote controller 54 and not at the storage units 52. As discussed in paragraph [0005] in the background of the above-identified patent application, one of the disadvantages of systems with one PC management system is that when that system becomes inaccessible then none of the key control units can be accessed, polled or updated. Additionally, having one point of contact and processing at one PC management system further limits the types of functions and features which can be implemented in the system. Similarly, Shniberg does not disclose or suggest the claimed server system in each of the stations that independently determines whether authorization to access the station is permitted.

In sharp contrast, the present invention provides a much more robust and reliable asset management system. As discussed in paragraph [0008] in the summary of the above-identified patent application, "By providing each one of the security asset managers with a web server, each of the security asset managers can be accessed directly by remote devices on a network . . . Since the security asset managers do not need to rely on any intermediate systems, the present invention offers a simpler way to interconnect the security asset managers which uses less power overall. This results in a more robust system since the security asset managers can function independently as a result of not having to rely on the intermediate systems . . . Each security asset manager can be modified, upgraded and/or replaced without affecting any of the other security asset managers that are not being changed. Additionally, the system can continue to operate despite one or more of the security asset managers becoming inaccessible."

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 15, and 28. Since claims 2-14 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 1, claims 16-27 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 15, and claims 29-42 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 28, they are distinguishable over the cited reference and are patentable in the same manner as claims 1, 15, and 28.

In view of all of the foregoing, Applicant submits that this case is in condition for allowance and such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: July 12, 2007

/Gunnar G. Leinberg/
Gunnar G. Leinberg
Registration No. 35,584

NIXON PEABODY LLP
Clinton Square, P.O. Box 31051
Rochester, New York 14603-1051
Telephone: (585) 263-1014
Facsimile: (585) 263-1600